

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 7349

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TAGS: PFOR OAS CU VE

SUBJECT: CUBAN SANCTIONS

REF: (A) CARACAS 7041 (B) BOGOT 6831 (C) SAN JOSE 2907

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1. FOREIGN MINISTER ASKED ME TO CALL URGENTLY THIS MORNING RE CUBA. HE WAS VERY MUCH DISTURBED AT THE UPI DISPATCH DATED WASHINGTON YESTERDAY WHICH WAS PUBLISHED UNDER HEADLINES "US DETAINS MOVEMENT TOWARD VENEZUELAN RECOGNITION OF CUBA. ITS AMBASSADOR TO THE OAS TALKED WITH CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ TO COUNTERACT AN ACTION INITIATED BY COSTA RICA." REST OF ARTICLE IS A FAIRLY COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF AMBASSADOR MAILLIARD'S INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT PEREZ AS REPORTED REFERENCE A. HOWEVER, IT GOES ON TO ADD THAT MAILLIARD ALSO SAW HIS "PERSONAL FRIEND" LOPEZ MICHELSEN WHEN LATTER TRANSITTED CARACAS AT END OF LAST WEEK.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER SCHACHT WAS OBVIOUSLY FEARFUL THAT PUBLICATION OF THIS WASHINGTON DATED STORY MIGHT SERVE AS A CATALYST HERE IN CARACAS, BOGOTA OR SAN JOSE. HE SAID EXPLICITLY HE WAS FEARFUL THAT LOPEZ MICHELSEN MIGHT FEEL IMPELLED TO MOVE MORE REAPIDLY ON RECOGNITION OF CUBA THAN MIGHT OTHERWISE HAVE BEEN THE CASE.

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3. IT WAS CLEAR THAT FOREIGN MINISTER'S THINKING NOW TRENDS TOWARD

A MORE RAPID SCENARIO IN TAKING UP FACIO'S FORMULA FOR A FACT-FINDING COMMISSION. SCHACHT ANTICIPATED THAT PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES AT THE OAS COULD PRESENTLY MEET TO SET UP SUCH A COMMISSION BUT THAT HE THOUGHT THEIR DESIRES FOR A DELAYED DECISION COULD BE MET IF THE COMMISSION DID NOT MAKE KNOWN ITS FINDINGS UNTIL NOVEMBER.

4. RE PARAGRAPH 2 REFERENCE D, WITHOUT REVEALING SOURCE I SAID I HAD HEARD A RUMOR THAT CUBA HAD INDICATED IT WAS NOT INTERESTED IN HAVING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ANY COUNTRY WHICH IS NOT WILLING TO ACT ON ITS OWN AUTHORITY BUT RATHER INSISTS ON WAITING FOR A COLLECTIVE DECISION OF THE OAS. TO THIS FOREIGN MINISTER REPLIED HE THOUGHT SUCH A RUMOR WAS NONSENSE. IT WAS CLEARLY MORE IN CASTRO'S INTEREST TO WAIT FOR A PROBABLE FAVORABLE FINDING BY THE FACT-FINDING OAS COMMITTEE WHICH WOULD THEN BE FOLLOWED BY A CHANGE IN THE OAS ATTITUDE TOWARD CUBA. THIS WOULD BE A FAR MORE IMPRESSIVE VINDICATION OF CASTRO THAN IF HE AWAITED PIECE-MEAL RECOGNITION BY INDIVIDUAL GOVERNMENTS.

5. SO FAR AS VENEZUELA'S POSITION WAS CONCERNED, IT HAD NOT CHANGED FROM THE DESCRIPTION GIVEN ME ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS BY THE PRESIDENT OF VENEZUELA; NAMELY, THAT VENEZUELA WANTED A DECISION ON CUBA MADE THROUGH THE OAS BECAUSE TO DO OTHERWISE WOULD BE TO PLACE THE OAS ITSELF IN JEOPARDY AND VENEZUELA, ALTHOUGH IT WOULD PROBABLY VOTE IN THE OAS MEETING OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES FOR FACIO'S FACT-FINDING COMMISSION, IT WOULD UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES BE A MEMBER OF THAT COMMISSION.

6. REVERTING TO THE UPI STORY WHICH OBVIOUSLY HAS DEEPLY DISTURBED AND ANGERED THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT, FONMIN SCHACHT WONDERED OUT LOUD IF IT MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR SOME VERY HIGH OFFICIAL IN WASHINGTON (HERE HE MENTIONED SECRETARY KISSINGER) TO ISSUE A DENIAL OF THE UPI STORY. THIS, HE THOUGHT, MIGHT HAVE A BENEFICIAL EFFECT PARTICULARLY ON THE PRESIDENT-ELECT OF COMOMBIA AND ITS EXISTING PRESIDENT PASTRANA. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT SAY SO, IT WAS CLEAR THAT SCHACHT WAS THINKING ALSO OF HIS OWN PRESIDENT. IN THIS CONNECTION, ACCORDINGLY, I RECOMMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT DO WHAT IT CAN TO ISSUE A DENIAL OF THE UPI STORY. IF SUCH A DEMENTI CAME FROM THE SECREATRY ITSELF, IT WOULD HAVE MORE IMPACT HERE AND PROBABLY ALSO IN BOGOTA.
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7. AS WE TERMINATED OUR CONVERSATION, FONMIN SAID HE WOULD GET IN TOUCH THIS AFTERNOON WITH FACIO'S REPRESENTATIVE IN CARACAS, BLANCO, AND WOULD CALL ME BACK IF THERE WERE ANY ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS HE MIGHT HAVE TO OFFER. I DO NOT FEEL, HOWEVER, THAT SHOULD WE DECIDE TO ISSUE A RECTIFICATION OF THE UPI STORY, THAT WE SHOULD WAIT FOR SCHACHT'S CONCERSATION WITH BLANCO.

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